

MASTER OF
KUNG FU

MARVEL COMICS GROUPTM



38
MAR
02449



THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FUTM

**MARTIAL
ARTS
MADNESS--**
AS YOU HAVE NEVER
SEEN IT BEFORE!



**CLAWS OF THE
CAT!**

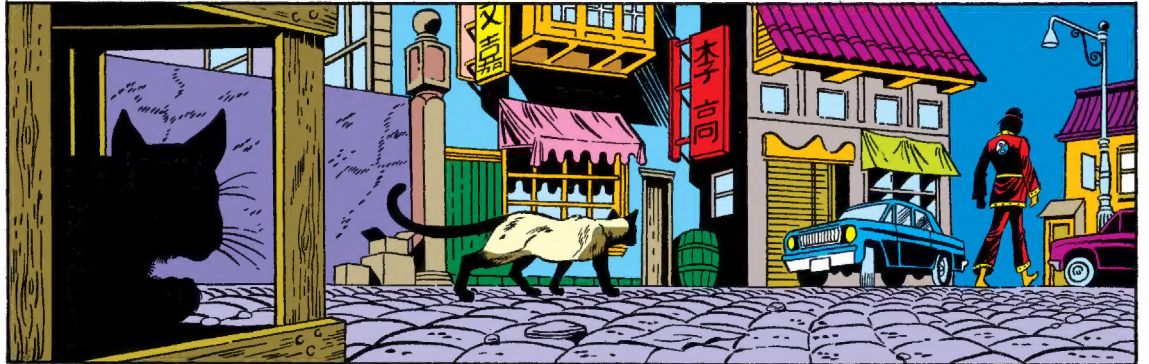
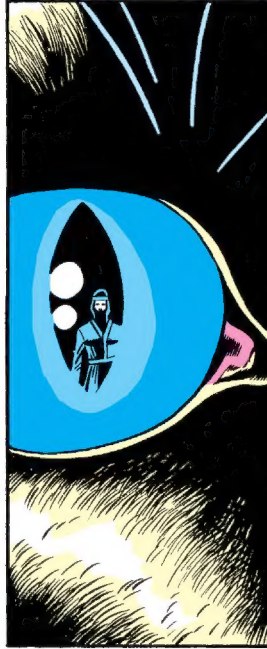
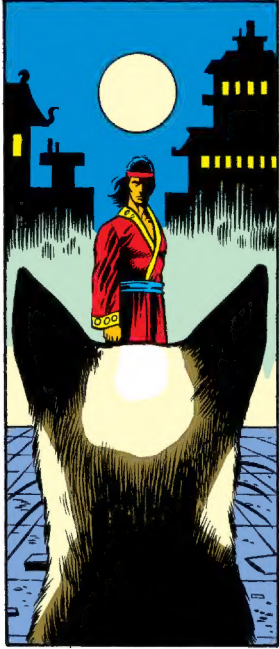
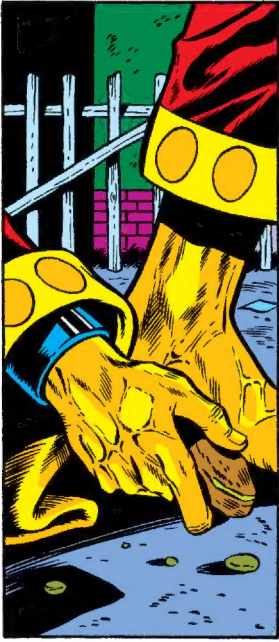
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on earth...and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my *name*.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **MASTER OF KUNG FU!**™



57-132

DOUG MOENCH & PAUL GULACY STORY / ART	DAN ADKINS INKER	A. KAWECKI LETTERER	PETRA G. COLORIST	M. WOLFGAN EDITOR
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"I HAVE COME HERE TO FIND A CAT TO FIND HIS CUNNING AND STEALTH AND MYSTERY... AND TO MATCH MYSELF AGAINST HIM... ON THE EDGE OF DEATH..."

"I WILL FIND HIM NEAR A PEACOCK OF JADE."

"THIS I HAVE AGREED TO DO..."



BUT **WHY**, LAD--? YOU'VE NEVER REFUSED A MISSION **BEFORE...**



YOU HAVE NEVER ASKED ME TO **KILL** A MAN BEFORE.



I SAID NOTHING ABOUT **KILLING** HIM, SHANG-CHI. WE MERELY WANT YOU TO GO TO **HONG KONG--**



--AND STOP HIS **OPERATIONS...** GET THE **DOCUMENTS BACK** FROM HIM.

THE ONLY WAY TO STOP SUCH A MAN IS TO **KILL** HIM. NO **DOCUMENTS** ARE WORTH **DEATH.**



YOU DON'T SEEM TO **UNDERSTAND**--HIS SUSPICIONS ARE LIKELY NEAR THE **BREAKING POINT NOW.** OUR **COUNTER-AGENT** IS IN DANGER EVERY SECOND WE **DELAY.**



SIR DENIS IS **RIGHT**, SHANG-CHI--SHE **IS** IN GREAT DANGER. **PLEASE**, TRY TO **SAVE** HER FROM HIM...



...NOT FOR THE **DOCUMENTS...** FOR HER **LIFE.**

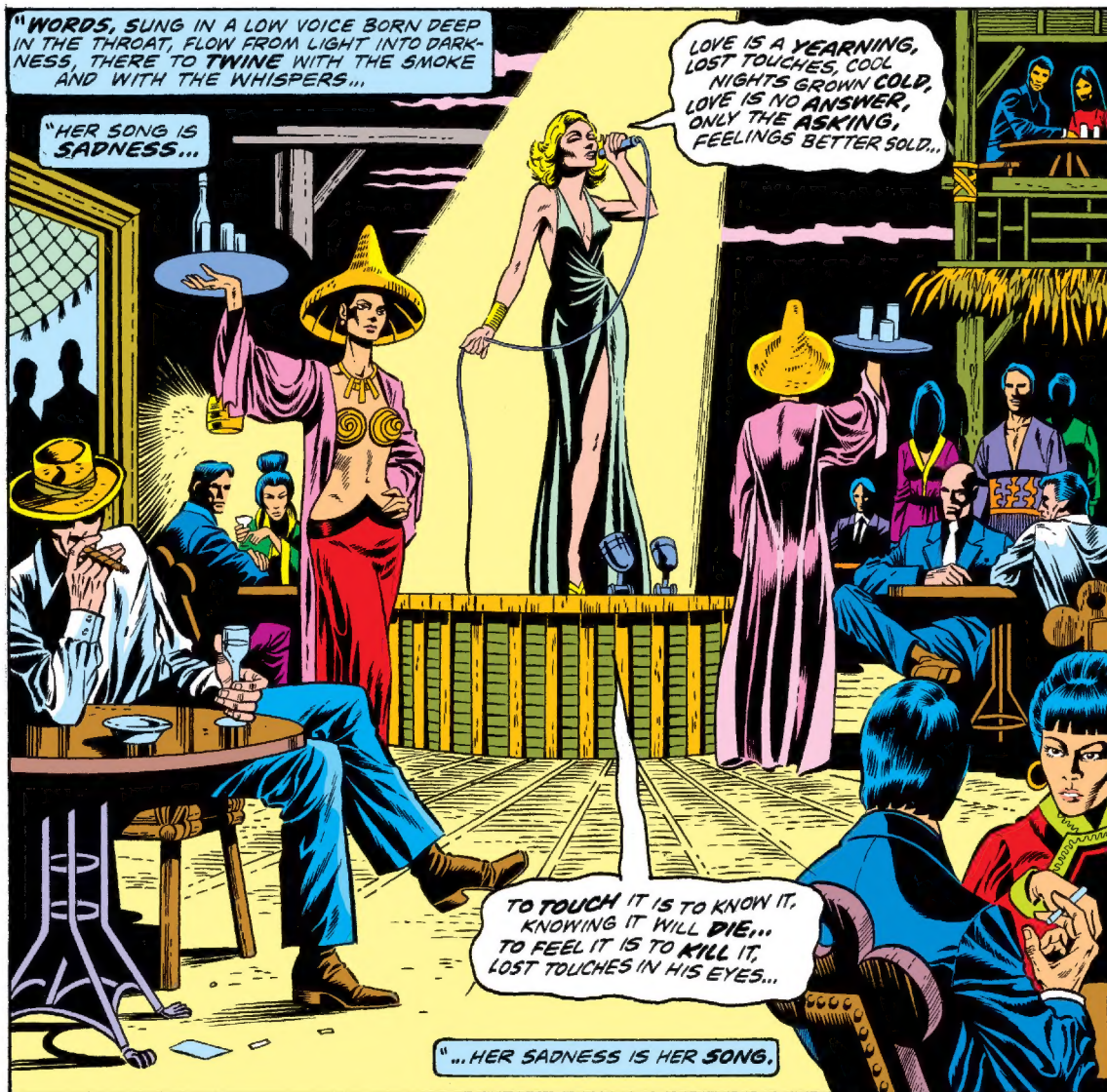
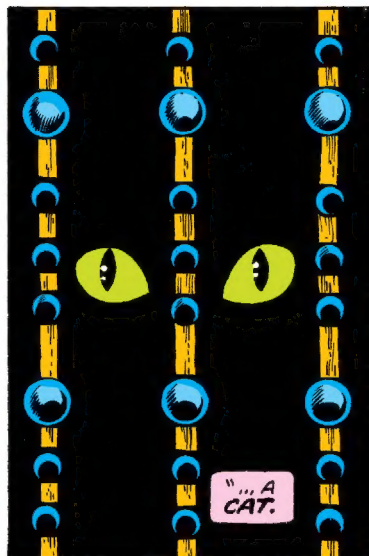
VERY WELL... FOR A **LIFE**, NOT **DEATH.**

YOU'VE MADE THE **RIGHT CHOICE**, SHANG-CHI, BUT DON'T MAKE IT **LIGHTLY.** HIS NAME IS **SHEN KUEI...**



...BUT BECAUSE OF HIS **CUNNING, STEALTH, AND MYSTERY**, HE IS ALSO KNOWN AS... **CAT.**





"HE WOULD BELONG HERE, HIS SPIRIT FINDING SYMPATHY IN THIS PLACE, A CAT'S EYE AMONG SADNESS, HIS WALK THROUGH HER SONG... BUT I DO NOT SEE HIM..."



"...AND I AM NOT CERTAIN I WISH TO FIND HIM..."

NEVER FINDING,
EVER SEARCHING,
FOR TEARS
NEVER CRIED...



EVER HOPING, NEVER
KNOWING,
LOVE IS ALWAYS...



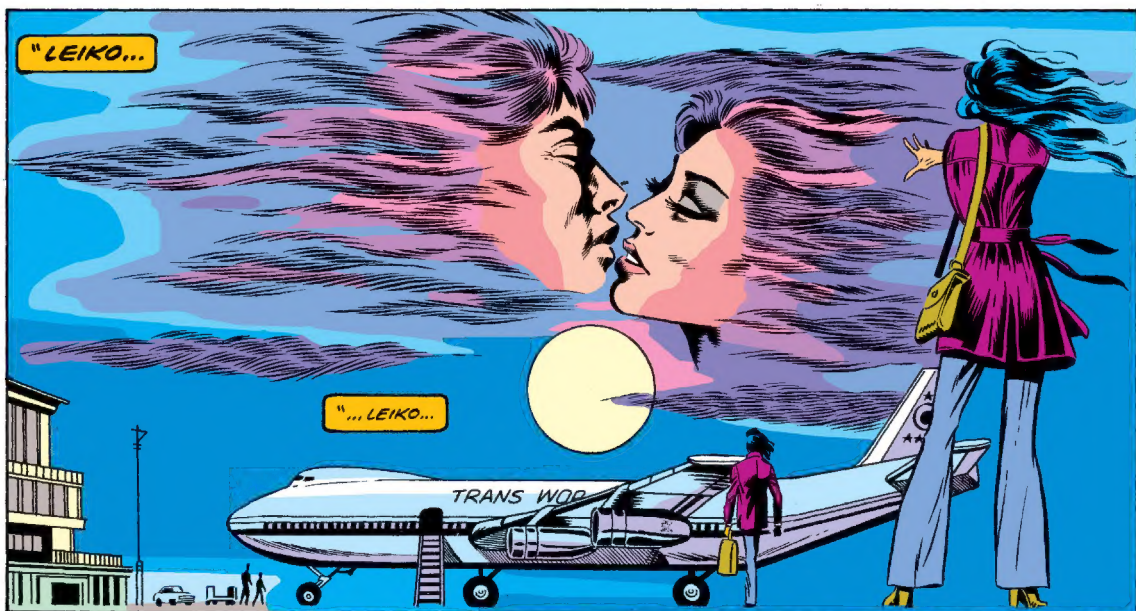
...GOODBYE...

--BEFORE WE SAY GOOD-
BYE, SHANG-CHI... PLEASE.



I... DO NOT
UNDERSTAND,
YOU WISH ME TO...
MERELY SAY YOUR
NAME...?

YES... MERELY
MY NAME...



YOU HAVE SAID MY
NAME... AND KISSED
MY LIPS, SHANG-
CHI...



... BUT YOU HAVE
NEVER SAID...
GOODBYE...

"THE MEMORY FADES..."



"...ENDS WITH HER
SONG."



AND WHAT
BRINGS
YOU...

... TO HONG
KONG?

I HAVE COME
TO FIND... A
CAT.

I...
SEE.

DO YOU KNOW
WHERE
I MAY
FIND
THIS
CAT?

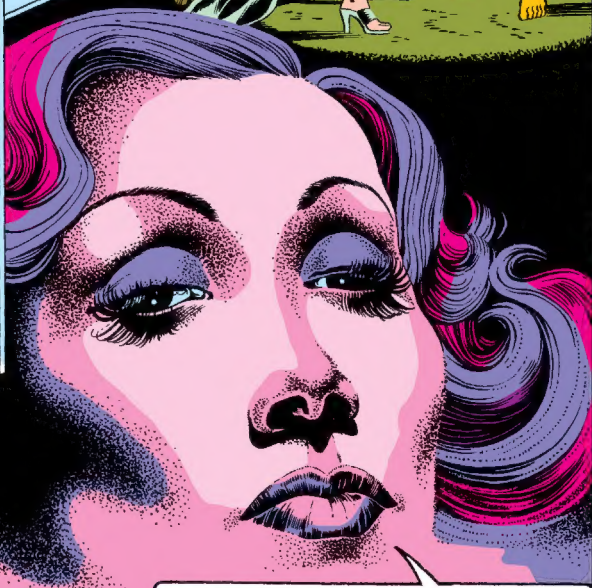
PROTECT
ME? IT SEEMS
YOUR INFORMATION
IS A LITTLE
CONFUSER...

THEN, YOU DO
NOT
WISH
TO RETURN
TO LONDON?

IN
OLD CHINA,
THERE ONCE
ABOUNDED
MAGICIANS...

YES...YOUR
CODE-WORDS HAVE
FOUND SMITH'S
COUNTER-AGENT.
I AM SHE.

THEN I HAVE COME TO
PROTECT YOU FROM
THE CAT-- FROM **SHEN
KUEI**. FEAR OF DEATH
AT HIS HANDS NEED
NO LONGER PREVENT
YOU FROM RETURNING
TO **LONDON.**



THEY WERE CALLED '**BEWITCHERS
OF THE NIGHT**,' THESE MAGICIANS...
AND WITH COLORED LANTERNS AND
BENGAL LIGHTS FOR THE **EYES**,
CYMBAL MUSIC FOR THE **EARS**, BURN-
ING INCENSE FOR THE **NOSE**, SWEET
NECTARS FOR THE **TONGUE**, AND BALLS
OF JADE WHICH SPECTATORS WERE
ASKED TO RUB GENTLY BETWEEN THEIR
FINGERS, THESE BEWITCHERS OF
THE NIGHT PLAYED ON THE **FIVE
HUMAN SENSES** UNTIL THEY CAST
THEIR AUDIENCE INTO A **DREAM
WORLD**...TURNING AN ORDINARY EVENING
INTO A NIGHT OF **FANTASY**.
"THESE MAGICIANS NO LONGER
EXIST, AND NIGHTS IN CHINA ARE NO
LONGER **BEWITCHED**. BUT THEY
NEVER EXISTED IN LONDON... AND
HERE, AT LEAST, IN THE EVENING
BREEZE... THEIR **GHOSTS LINGER...**

AND SO, I MUST ASK YOU TO LEAVE ME ALONE, SHANG-CHI.

YES, I HAVE KNOWN OF YOUR COMING...KNOWN YOUR NAME. BUT I DID NOT ASK YOU TO COME...

YOU MAY TELL SMITH THAT DURING MY STAY IN HONG KONG I HAVE LEARNED MUCH MORE THAN HE WANTED ME TO LEARN...

BUT AT LEAST TELL ME WHERE TO FIND --

HOLD, WHITE ONE.

"WHITE...?"

PERHAPS YOU DID NOT HEAR JULIETTE. SHE HAS CHOSEN TO SING HERE EVERY NIGHT--FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG. SHE HAS LEFT LONDON FOR CHINA--

--AND SHE DOES NOT WISH TO BE BOTHERED BY A DOG WHO HAS CHOSEN THE OPPOSITE PATH...

...AND BETRAYED HIS OWN PEOPLE--!

WAP

SAP

THAP

SHWOKK

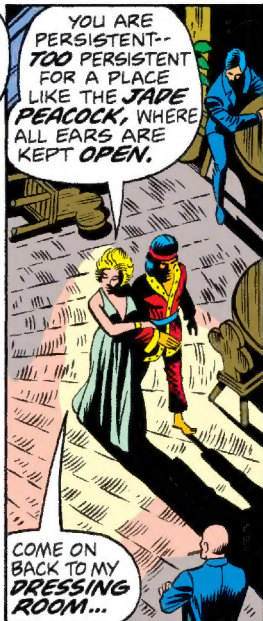
"HE IS YOUNG, YOUNGER EVEN THAN I, UNSKILLED... AND PERHAPS I HAVE EMPLOYED GREATER FORCE THAN NECESSARY TO REPEL HIS ATTACK..."

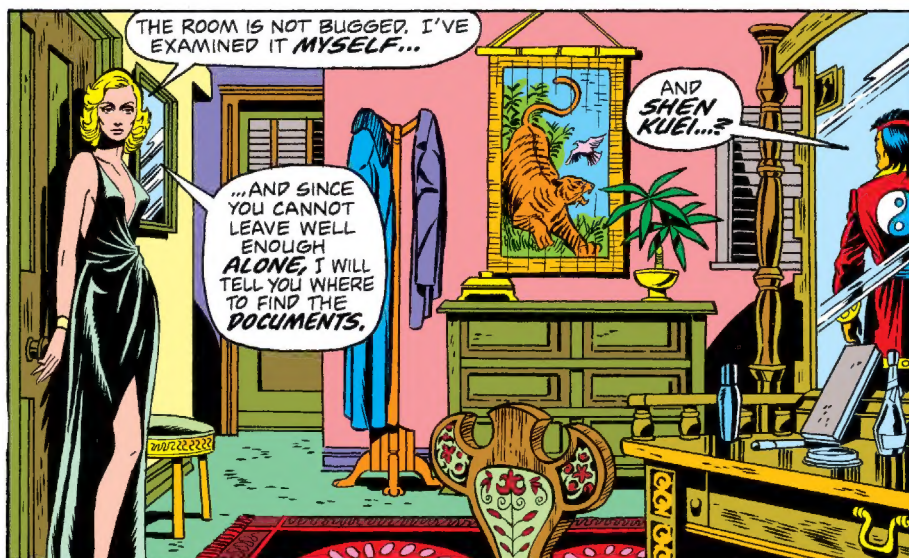
"BUT IT WAS NOT HIS FORCE OR HIS SKILL WHICH I OPPOSED. IT WAS HIS WORDS WHICH ATTACKED ME."

YOU ARE TOUGH--A GOOD FIGHTER.

BUT THIS MATTER IS NOT YET FINISHED...

...WHITE ONE.





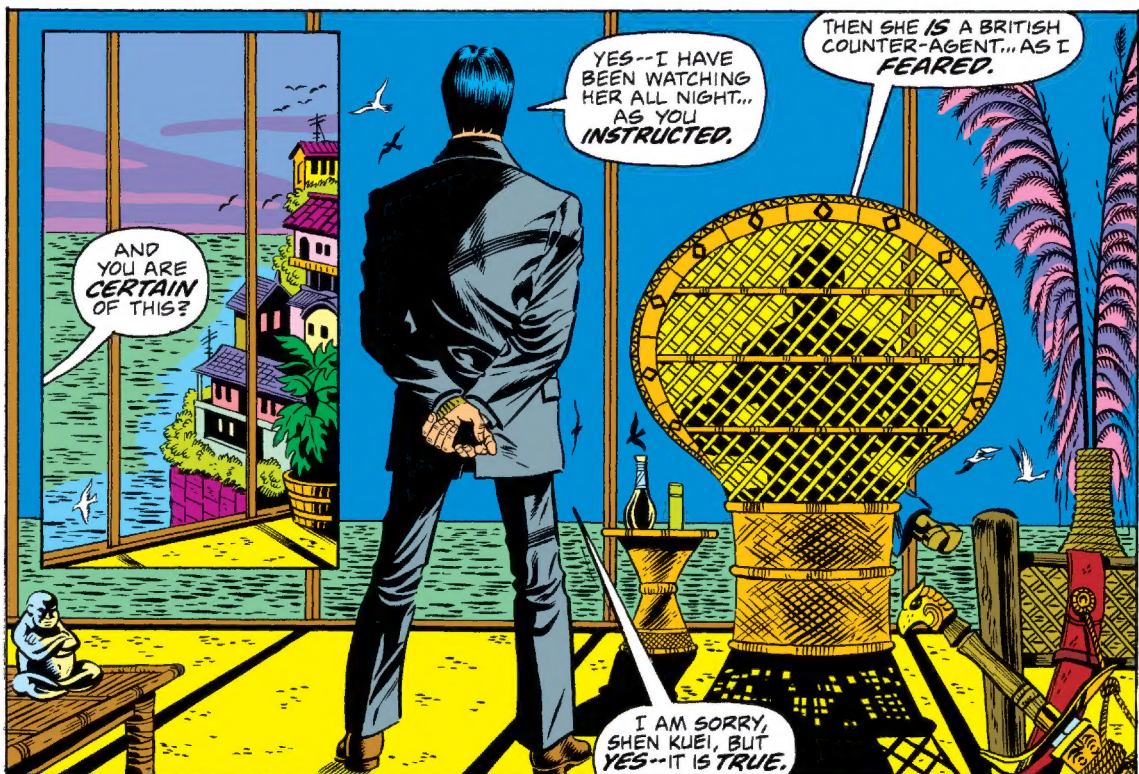
THE ROOM IS NOT BUGGED. I'VE EXAMINED IT **MYSELF**...

AND **SHEN KUEI**...?

...AND SINCE YOU CANNOT LEAVE WELL ENOUGH **ALONE**, I WILL TELL YOU WHERE TO FIND THE **DOCUMENTS**.



...IS MY **LOVER**.

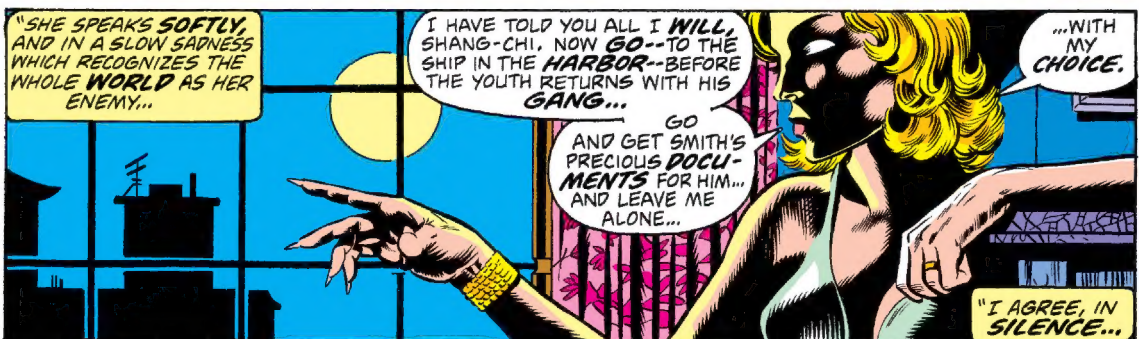


AND YOU ARE **CERTAIN** OF THIS?

YES--I HAVE BEEN WATCHING HER ALL NIGHT... AS YOU **INSTRUCTED**.

THEN SHE **IS** A BRITISH COUNTER-AGENT... AS I **FEARED**.

I AM SORRY, SHEN KUEI, BUT **YES**--IT IS **TRUE**.



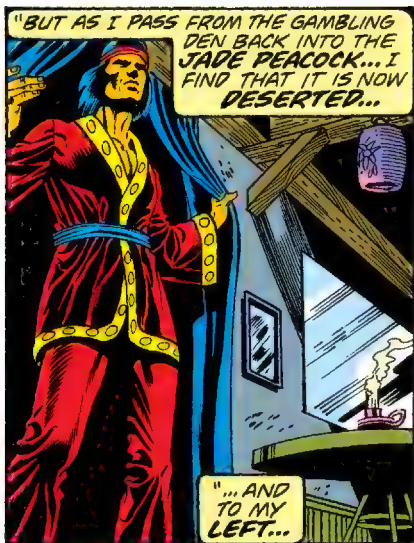
"SHE SPEAKS **SOFTLY**, AND IN A SLOW SADNESS WHICH RECOGNIZES THE **WHOLE WORLD** AS HER **ENEMY**..."

I HAVE TOLD YOU ALL I **WILL**, SHANG-CHI. NOW **GO**--TO THE SHIP IN THE **HARBOR**--BEFORE THE YOUTH RETURNS WITH HIS **GANG**...

GO AND GET SMITH'S **PRECIOUS DOCUMENTS** FOR HIM... AND LEAVE ME **ALONE**...

...WITH MY **CHOICE**.

"I **AGREE**, IN **SILENCE**..."



"BUT AS I PASS FROM THE GAMBLING DEN BACK INTO THE JADE PEACOCK... I FIND THAT IT IS NOW DESERTED..."

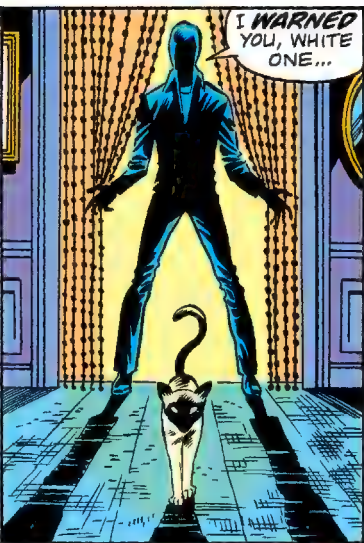
"...AND TO MY LEFT..."



"...STRETCHING INWARD FROM THE ENTRANCE..."



"...A SHADOW IS FRAMED BY ANOTHER."



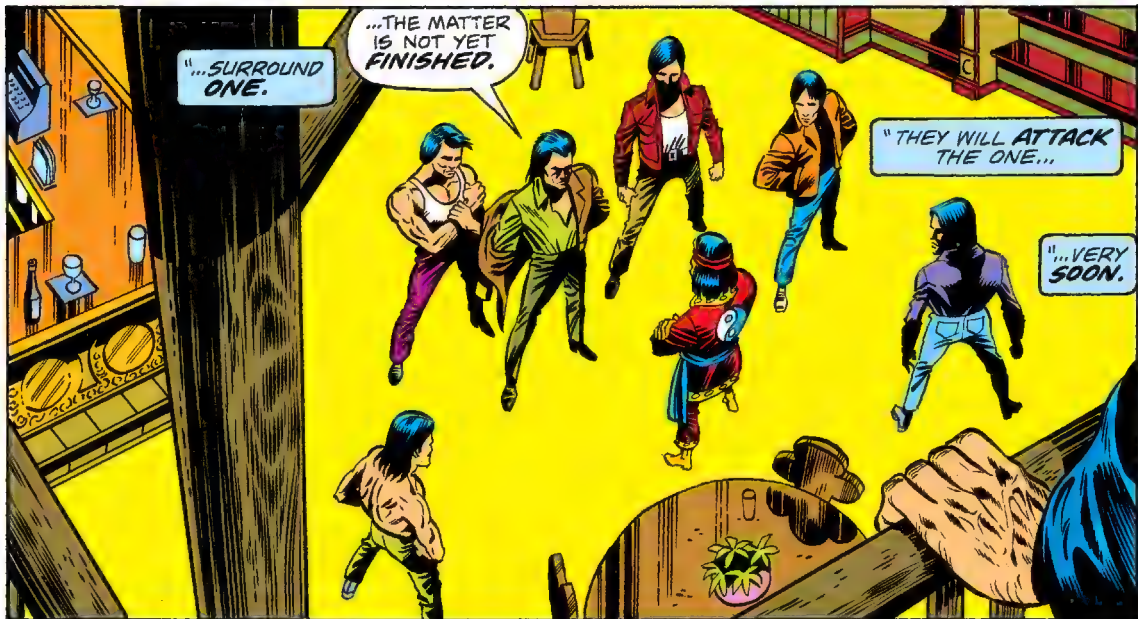
"I WARNED YOU, WHITE ONE..."



"A PLACE IN DARKNESS..."



"...WHERE MANY..."



"...SURROUND ONE."

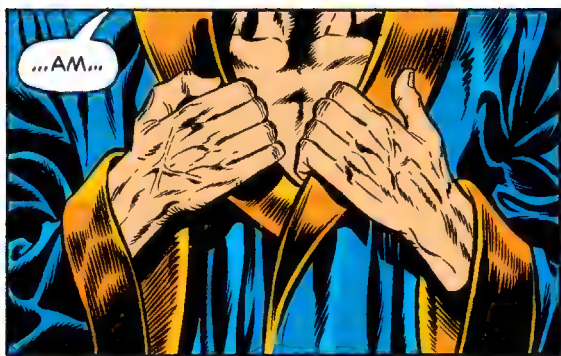
"...THE MATTER IS NOT YET FINISHED."

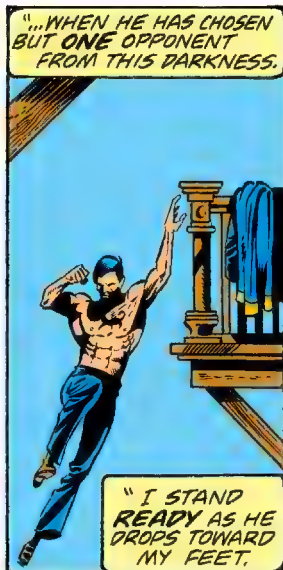
"THEY WILL ATTACK THE ONE..."

"...VERY SOON."



"WAS THE DAGGER
HURLED WITH LESS THAN
TRUE SKILL...OR DOES
IT SERVE THE SAME PUR-
POSE A **STONE** SERVED,
EARLIER THIS EVENING...?"





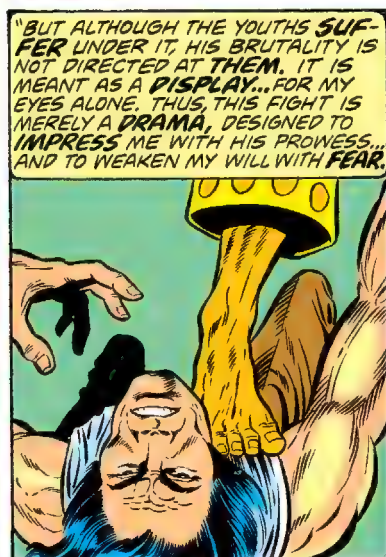
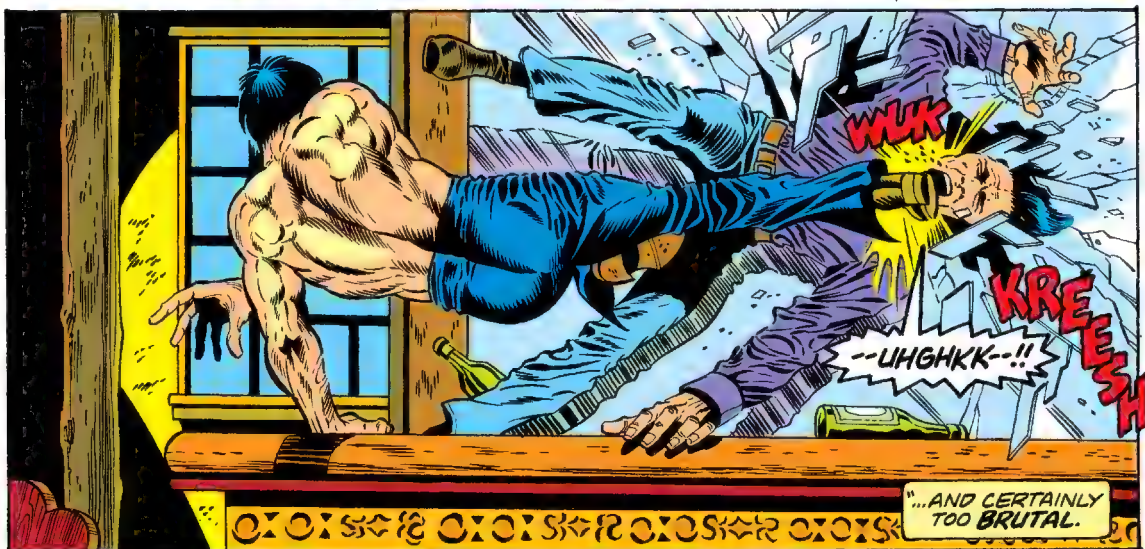
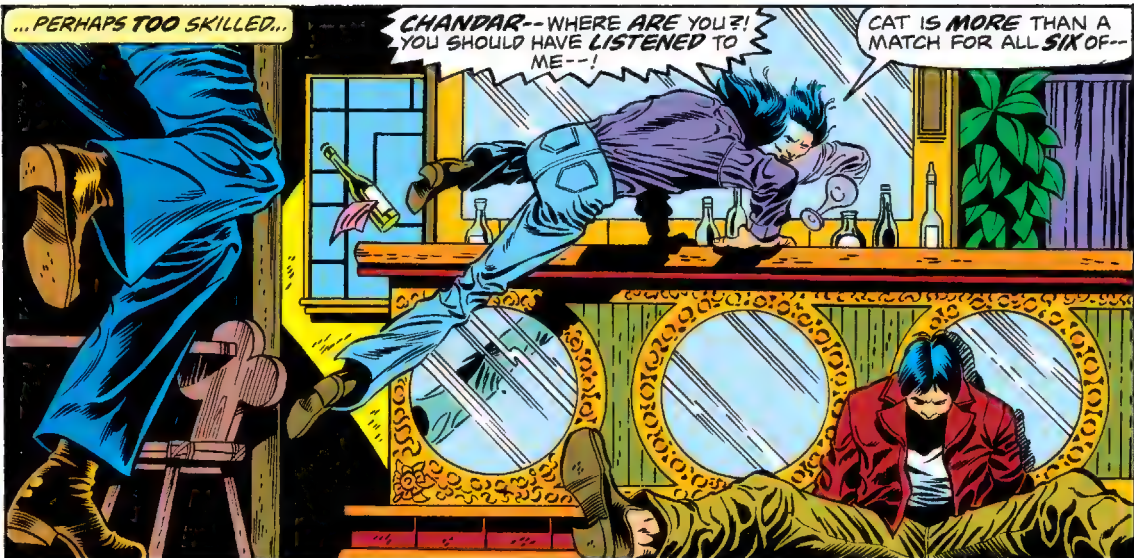
"BUT..."

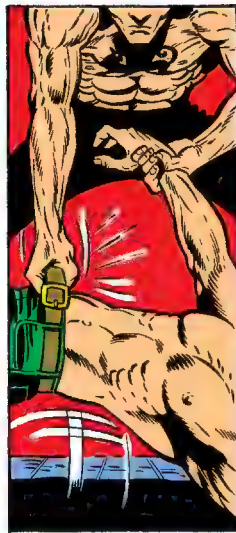
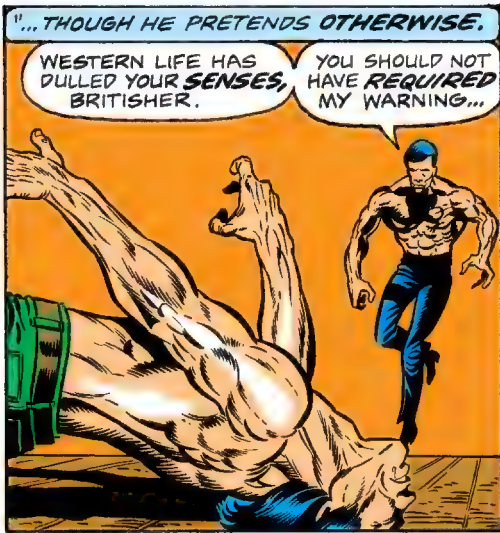
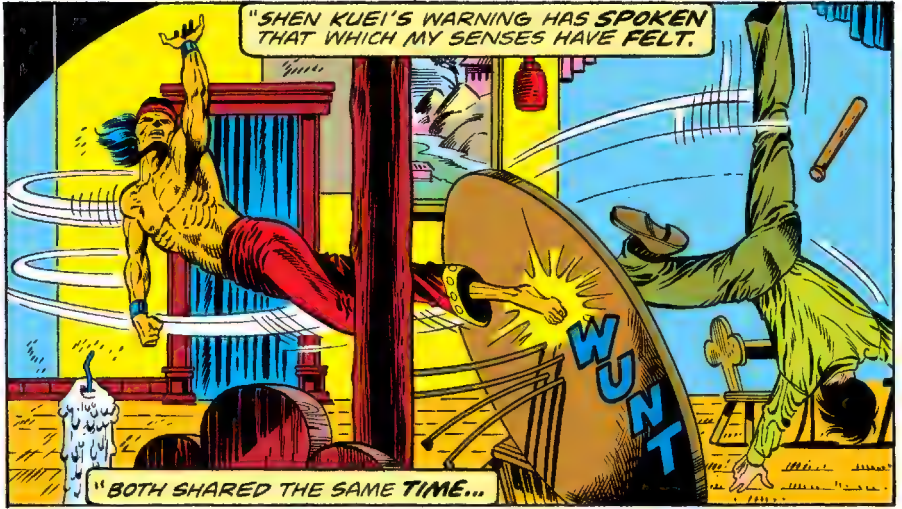
PREPARE YOURSELF, BRITISHER...

WE SHALL FIGHT TOGETHER THIS NIGHT...FOR A TIME.









"AND IF HE HAS **STUNNED** THE LEADER--THE ONE CALLED **CHANDAR**--HE HAS NOT PREVENTED HIM FROM REACHING HIS **GOAL**..."

YOU ARE **EVERYTHING** THAT IS WHISPERED OF YOU IN THE **STREET**, CAT--YOU ARE **WORTHY** OF THE LEGENDS DWELLING IN YOUR NAME..."

"IN ANTICIPATION HE HAS ALREADY STARTED HIS RUN--"

"...BUT YOU ARE STILL A **MAN**..."

"...AND **ANY** MAN CAN BE TAKEN WITH THE **KNIFE**!"

"--AND NOW ENDS IT WITH **PRECISE** TIMING."

THEN **USE** YOUR KNIFE, **CHANDAR**--AND USE IT **WELL**--

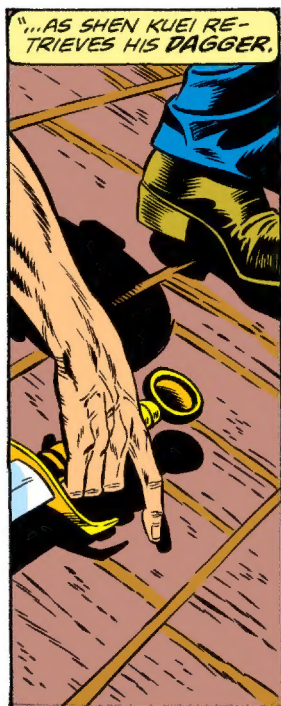
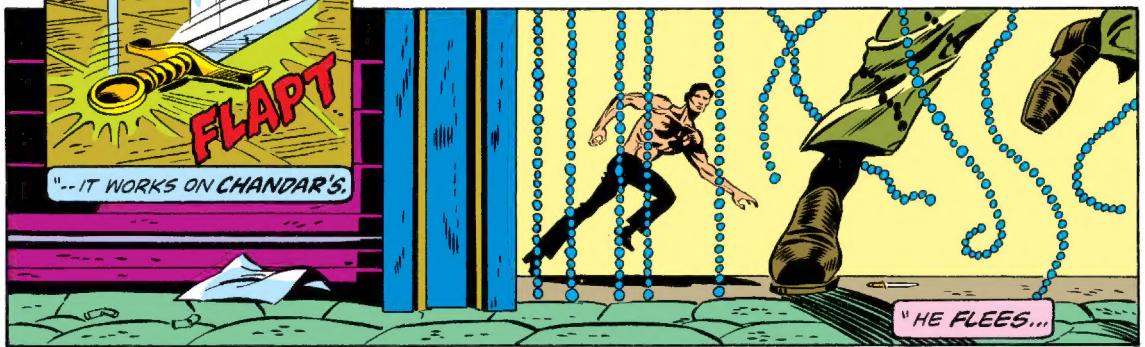
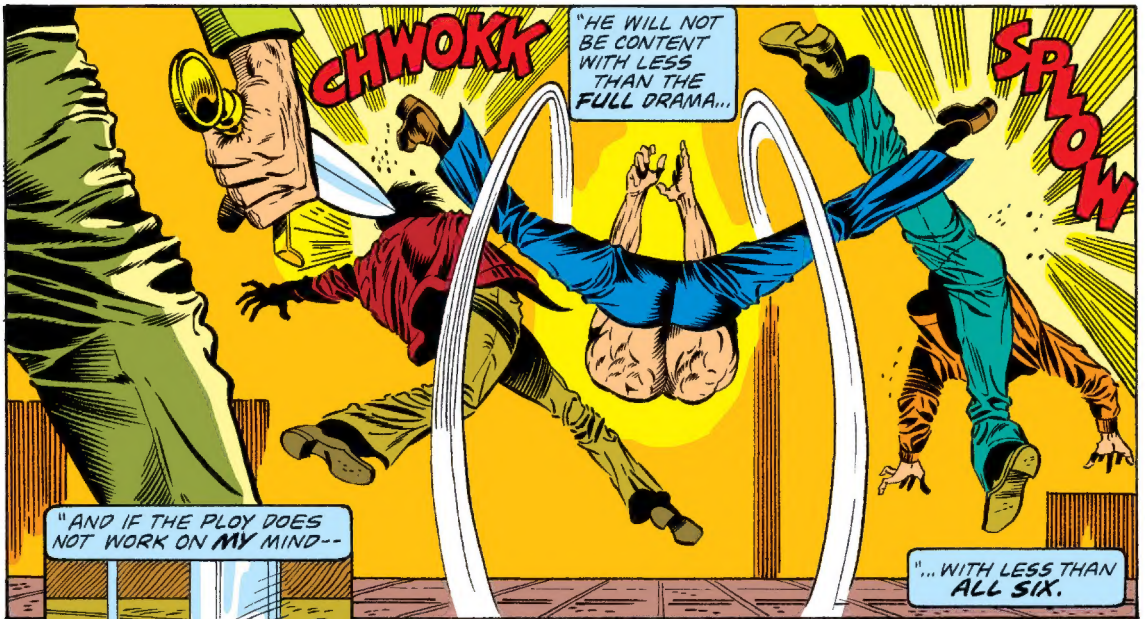
"THE TWO WOULD **FLEE**..."

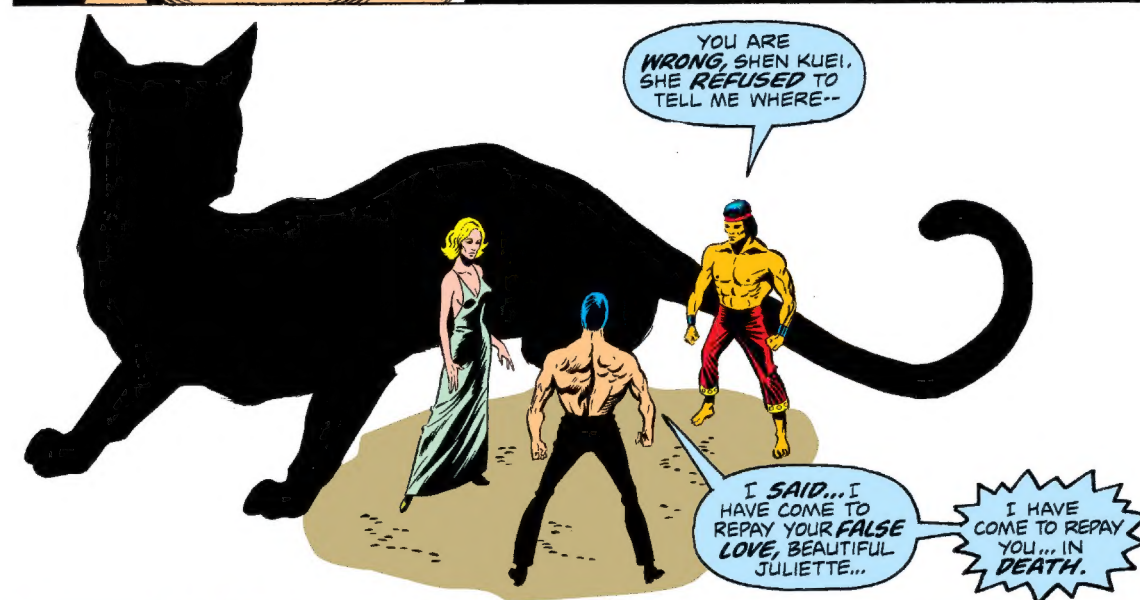
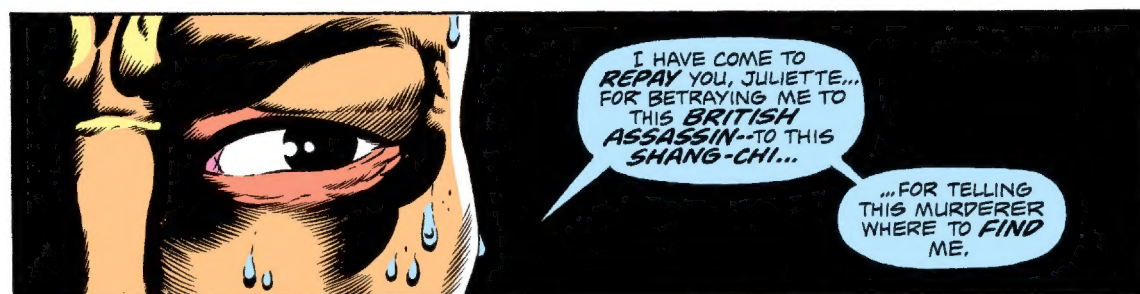
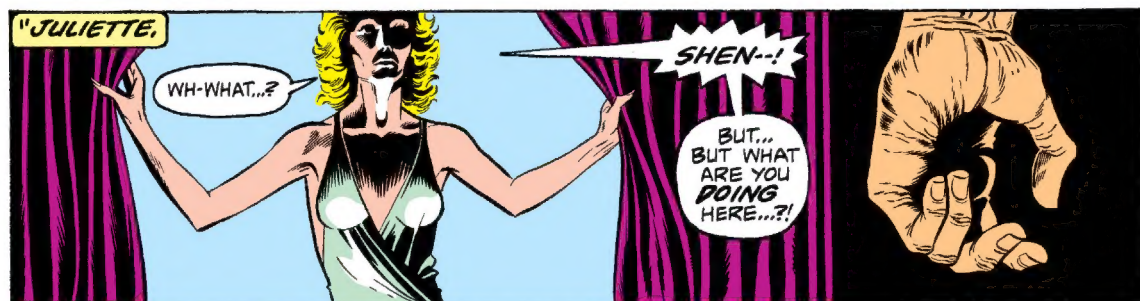
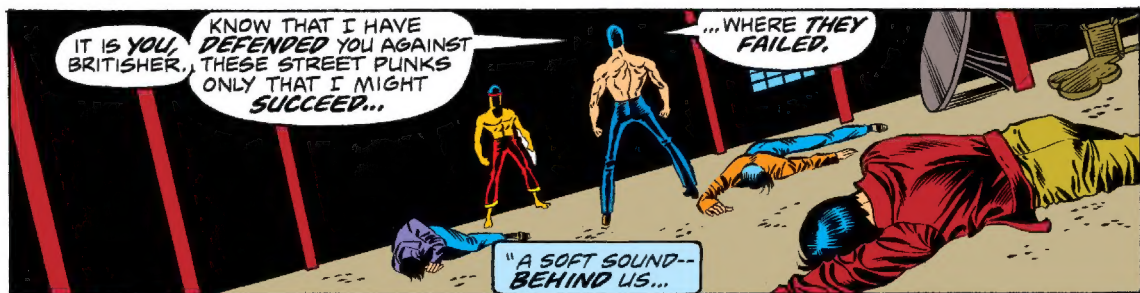
--FOR YOU WILL USE **US** NO LONGER!!

"NO."

"AND SHEN KUEI PERMITS THEIR FLIGHT, CHOOSING TO FACE **CHANDAR**--TO FACE THE **KNIFE**..."

"I HAVE JUDGED HIS STANCE **WRONGLY**..."





NEXT: MOENCH AND GULACY BUST COMICS WIDE OPEN WITH THE MOST BLOOD-BOILING, DEFINITIVE MARTIAL ARTS ACTION EVER PORTRAYED...WHEN SHANG-CHI IS FORCED TO FACE CAT IN A--

FIGHT WITHOUT PITY!

MISSIVES TO THE MASTER!

56 MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

APOLOGIA: There really is a good reason why this letters page is three issues late. Honest! Fact is, the two-parter presented in issues #36 & 37 ("Cages of Myth, Menagerie of Mirrors" and "Web of Dark Death") was originally intended as a single 40-page story for the fifth issue of the now-defunct GIANT-SIZE version of MOKF. When the GIANT was regrettably cancelled, it was decided to present the epic story in Shang-Chi's monthly book. Now, when you try to squeeze a 40-page story into two 18-page issues, something's gotta give — namely, the letters pages. (However, even a bona fide PAID AD was dropped from #37 — in addition to the letters page.) But take heart, people; the letters page is back to stay — and, in fact, doubles to TWO pages beginning next issue. Now for the letters...

Dear Doug and Paul,

Please excuse my silence during the past three months, but I felt it best to wait until the "Crystal Connection" trilogy was concluded. Now that the wait is over, I must express my view on the "new direction" to which MOKF has detoured — something which should stir controversy among your readers, since the thematic change seems to violate the basic premise of the Shang-Chi book.

However, Shang-Chi's choice to follow the path of "direct action" rather than continuing along the road of pacifism is a more realistic way of dealing with the world. Waiting around to be provoked while your fellow man is attacked or in danger of future attack is a rather apathetic and non-humanitarian philosophy. Besides, as the adage says: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

One of the most difficult tasks facing today's entertainment media is the problem of producing action-packed dramas, populated by believable characters in a dramatic situation, and which say something meaningful to society. The "Crystal Connection" trilogy solved this perplexity for the graphic story medium. The poetic genius of Doug Moench has proved fundamental in construction what may prove to be the definitive espionage thriller of the seventies, Marvel-style. Through the late sixties and early seventies, Marvelites were first tormented by poorly written tales of this genre in the Steranko-less SHIELD stories, and then left without *any* espionage tales at all. But in the new MOKF, Mr. Moench seems destined to rekindle the suspense thriller flame at Marvel, and few things could be done better than with the phenomenal aid of Paul Gulacy. His artwork is the perfect complement for Doug's powerful scripts. Paul truly shines through with a clear, distinct style all his own — and one which I'm proud to say is housed at Marvel.

Doug and Paul have created literary milestones in the further structuring of characterization for Chi, Tarr, Smith, and Petrie — as well as the development of the headstrong Clive Reston, who is rumored to be the son of James Bond and the great-nephew of Sherlock Holmes.

And these two gentlemen have also produced some of the best antagonists this side of "Panther's Rage." The ruthless mastermind Velcro, his deadly aide Razor-Fist, the seductively dangerous Pavane, and the countless henchmen with true characterizations of their own.

I'm waiting for more (especially on this mysterious Mordillo) but frankly, after these past three issues, I truly wonder where the new wonderment mentioned on #31's letters page is going to come from — though it's obvious that the capabilities of Misters Moench and Gulacy know no limits.

Clyde Talley
14700 Blythe St. #18
Van Nuys, CA 91402

Dear Marvel,

Boy, am I glad Paul Gulacy is back.

MOKF #33 was great. As usual, Doug penned a real winner of a script. The new villain Mordillo is an extremely exciting concept, and I really hope he stays around for a few issues.

Boy, am I glad Paul Gulacy is back!

Larry Dean
6362 Laurentian Ct.
Flint, MI 48504

Seems to be an echo around here. We've heard the same sentiment expressed in virtually every one of the kazillion letters MOKF has been receiving.

Boy, are we glad Paul Gulacy is back!

Dear Marvel,

I see Doug's been taking his Gerber pills again.

Jerry Lazar
4 Bly Ct.
Great Neck, NY 11023

Nope, but we've heard nasty rumors that Gerber has been dipping into the Doug pills lately...

Dear Masters of Kung Fu,

I have been silent too long. If none stand in awe and admiration of Paul Gulacy's artwork, I shall admit that I do. If those who see are too stunned to honor his skill, then humbly I will. Perceptual pen poised with the sensitive vibrations of inner vision focusing with poetic intensity, he endows his art with the soul of subtlety and kinetic communication. Actions flow, pictures impact, shocking the unprepared senses. Like the strokes of a master surgeon, Paul Gulacy's images relieve the pain within one's mind. A classical stream of motion amidst a landscape of delicate drama, art transcending the moment. Here lies sheer bliss. One must study his powerful pages with much more than a student's delight. How may one thank you for letting us view the life of a man's gifted craft?

A few thoughts of equal feeling rise in behalf of the poetic sense of Doug Moench. His chosen words ring flawlessly in tune with Gulacy's artwork. One appreciates the detail in his words. Gulacy and Moench: Two poetic artists who portray in harmony not only drama and a theme of events, but humor in understatement.

In a letter you published in DAREDEVIL #56, I was fortunate to be among the first to voice admiration for Barry Smith, then an up-and-coming neophyte. For what it's worth, from a now 21-year-old student of film, Gulacy and Moench have that same admiration.

Rick Werft
314 Harford Place
Upland, CA 91786

Whew! That's all we can say to you, Rick — that and thanks.

And to the rest of our readers, all we can say is: Wouldja believe we actually *boned down* Rick's letter? Tickled and ego-blown as we were, even we can be embarrassed. Gawrsh...

MARVEL VALUE STAMP

